

# CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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NO. 15.

## ORIGINAL SERMON.

By T. J. SAWYER.

Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Rom. viii, 9.

To a world lying in wickedness, the coming of Jesus Christ was an event well worthy of heavenly announcement; for he came laden with the richest blessings that God has vouchsafed to mankind. He came to be our way, our guide, our resurrection and life. He was to purify and exalt, give action and energy to the human mind. His teachings were to instruct—his spirit to inspire—his light to illuminate. His conduct was to be the example, and his character the pattern of our own. In fine, he was to mould us into his own moral image, make us in some measure partakers of his spiritual nature, and fit us for the enjoyment of his spiritual blessings. Hence, "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

To the christian, it is profitable very often to review the life, and contemplate the character of his divine Master. In the exercise he must find not only pleasure, but edification. If a familiarity with what is beautiful in nature, tends to refine the feelings—if to gaze on the billowy ocean, or the out-spread sky, enlarges the soul, what an influence ought moral beauty and grandeur, to exert in purifying our affections and exalting our minds! The biography of the virtuous and the good, has ever been deemed an important aid in the formation of character. We listen without interest, and consequently without improvement, to the dull and often subtle details of the learned moralist, while a single instance of practical excellence would attract the attention, and warm and determine the heart. The simple story of a virtuous peasant, illustrating fixed purpose and undeviating principle amidst the vicissitudes and temptations of ordinary life, would better and more extensively subserve the great interests of morality, than the labored treatises of Epictetus, Cicero and Seneca. We need a living or permanent example before us which we may imitate—a character to which we may aspire. And as we gaze more and more intently, and with deeper and deeper interest upon it, we shall feel ourselves, in the beautiful language of Scripture, "changed into the same image from glory to glory." Our sympathies will be mingling more intimately, and our feelings becoming of closer kindred with his whom we have chosen for our pattern.

It is a well known principle of the human mind, as well in relation to the moral as physical world, that familiarity generally renders tolerable and often even agreeable, what at first was uninviting or repulsive. The Iclander, accustomed from infancy to his cold and barren island, learns to love with ardor the desolate and cheerless scenery around him. The ancient Scandinavian, bred to the profession of war, had lost the finer feelings of domestic life, and exulted only in the battle cry and on the field of blood. His love of carnage went in fancy even beyond this world, and Valahall, the hall of slaughter, was his heaven.

If familiarity with such scenes is sufficient thus to transform the character, how much mightier influence ought the loveliness of virtue to exert, when made an object of frequent contemplation! And does it not exert such an influence? In the political world, I might point to

the example of our immortal Washington. The moment, when having achieved our national independence, the father of his country gave back into the hands of her citizens the sword by which that country's salvation had been wrought out, was the moment of a world's political regeneration. Nations looked on and admired a scene, of which probably the past had afforded no parallel. Thenceforth, the names of Liberty and Washington were to be allied, and they must travel down together to the end of time. His spirit of patriotism has gone forth in its mightiness, and now doubtless breathes in the souls of millions. And it will yet live and animate nations unborn, and in the remotest corners of the earth.

In turning to the character of Jesus Christ as exemplified in his life, we shall find nothing to regret, but every thing to admire. In him was united that combination of virtues which constitutes a perfect character. Humble without meanness, decided without obstinacy, devotional without ostentation, careless of reproach and danger when incurred in the path of duty, ready to forgive his enemies, and alive with a universal affection to mankind, we may without hazard, challenge the world to produce his parallel, considered merely as a man and a moralist.

But we are led to regard him in a higher and more attractive character, as the beloved Son and Ambassador of God. We are called upon to honor and reverence him as the long expected and blessed Messiah. Above all, we should love him as our Master, and "the Savior of the world." Possessing so many claims upon human affection, it would be singular if over some, he did not exert a strong and abiding influence; if he did not impart to them something of his own spirit, give tone and temper to their feelings, and direction to their lives. While we yield not ourselves to the government and guidance of Christ, while we live in the habitual violation of his precepts without manifesting or enjoying his spirit, it needs little discernment to see that in a very important sense, we are none of his. It is true, we are his in a more outward manner, as belonging to his purchase and as making an integral part of that great bequest of God, to which reference is had in prophecy—"Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." But in the closer and more spiritual connexion which is to subsist between Christ and his disciples, we must be wholly deficient, unless we have in truth learned of him. To be a christian, to be Christ's indeed, our souls must commune with him, and in that communion find encouragement, and strength, and joy. We must take him for our pattern; our feelings must be influenced by his precepts, and our practice controlled by his example. In short, the same spirit that he manifested when on earth, must live, and breathe, and reign in our hearts, for "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

What were the prominent characteristics of our divine Master? To trace briefly some of these, will constitute our chief object in the remainder of this discourse.

Among the most lovely and attractive attributes of Jesus Christ, we may mention, first, HUMILITY. He was emphatically "meek and lowly in heart." Though sinless, he was not

ashamed to call the weak and erring and depraved children of earth, his brethren. With him, the little distinctions that pride creates were all lost. He regarded alike the high and low, the rich and poor. Though Lord of all things, he willingly became the servant of all. Unambitious of the poor honor that popular applause affords, he rather shrunk from the public gaze, when duty did not call him there to act. It was not of men he expected praise. From them he knew he should receive hatred for his love, persecution for his kindness, and death for his prayers. At the hand of God only, he anticipated honor and glory. When having wrought his most beneficent miracles, he chose rather that the subjects of his grace should "tell no man," than that his name should be sounded abroad with a trumpet. What an example for mankind! And yet how neglected! But too many of the professed followers and even the ministers of the humble Jesus, forget the spirit of their Master. In this age of miscalled christian exertions, how little do we see of that unostentatious and retiring charity, for which our great pattern was distinguished. A trifling benefaction made to any of the popular sectarian institutions of the day, is, with the name of the donor, trumpeted through the land. And this is done in his name, and for the building-up of his kingdom, who said, "But when thou doest thine alms let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." Look among the professed heralds of the cross. Are they willing to become in humility the servants of men, for Christ's sake? Would they not rather be lords? Struggling to be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, they seek for worldly titles and dignities, forgetful of the honor that cometh from God only, and regardless of that highest of all praise, the praise of being "a good minister of Jesus Christ." Beloved brethren, in the language of the apostle Paul, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but with lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than himself. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus:" for without his spirit, however lofty our pretensions, we are "none of his."

In connexion with his humility, our Savior discovered that decent self-respect and dignity, which are always the accompaniments of conscious virtue. The lowliness of mind and meekness of spirit which Jesus manifested, were far removed from degradation. He always seemed conscious of the dignity of his office, and the vastness of his mission, and never for a moment did he suffer himself to act or speak in a manner unworthy of them. These two qualities, so often incompatible, sweetly harmonized in the character of Christ. They softened down and corrected each other, so that while we admire his humility we cannot but love his dignity.

The second attribute to which I would invite attention, is DEVOTEDNESS TO THE WILL OF GOD. Our Savior himself declared that it was his "meat" to do his Father's will. At every hazard and every sacrifice, he would labor in the great cause of his mission. Situated as he was, it is evident that it must have required a loftiness of purpose and a strength of moral courage, of which history could afford us seldom if ever an instance, in order to execute the great work God had given him to finish. The fruit of his labor lay beyond Calvary. Its cross stood in full view



before him. There were months of toil to be endured—scoffs and insults to be received—and dangers to be encountered:—there was the last memorable feast of the Passover to be kept with his apostles—the agony of Gethsemane—the crown of thorns—the gorgeous robe—the reedy sceptre—the buffetings—the judgment, before he could reach the awful goal of his earthly race. In almost any, surely in all, of these there was enough to have paralyzed an ordinary mind. But Christ was immovable. With a martyr's spirit he gazed on them all. His heart was fixed in his glorious purpose. He was doing the will of God, and to that will he humbly bowed. Dangers could not deter him, death itself lost its wonted terrors, when he remembered the pleasure of his Father, and in perhaps the most trying moment of his life, he could say with serenity and confidence, "Not my will, but thine, O God, be done."

It is almost unnecessary to remark that in order to have enjoyed such a deep and pervading spirit of resignation, and to have been able to make such a total self-surrender to the divine disposal, "the Son of man" must have been assured beyond all doubt of the goodness of Heaven. To his view not even a passing cloud for a moment obscured the Divine Benevolence. Like a sun peerlessly set in the midday heavens, it must have shone with a constant glory embracing and blessing all. Such conceptions were familiar to his mind, and not unfrequently were they mingled with his ordinary teachings. "Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish will he give him a serpent? If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him." His own confidence in God was equal to what he inculcated. At the grave of Lazarus, "he lifted up his eyes and said, Father I thank thee that thou hast heard me; and I knew that thou hearest me always." This unwavering confidence in God's infinite wisdom and universal love never deserted him. He felt that "these light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." He knew that he should yet "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied;" therefore "for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Now without something of the spirit of Christ, we are none of his. Unless we possess a corresponding devotion of heart, and soul, and energies, to the will of our heavenly Father, we but poorly deserve the name of Christian. We must surrender ourselves unreservedly to his disposal, yielding ourselves with willing and even joyful hearts, to his authority and guidance. We must submit with becoming resignation to all the allotments of his providence. To do this, I need not say we must feel a steady and sustaining confidence in his parental and universal goodness. We must not only believe but also realize that God is "our Father," better than any earthly father, and whose love is tenderer and more enduring than a mother's love. This was the confidence of Christ, and without his spirit we are none of his. Our prayers should also be accompanied by the same lively faith as attended our Master's. And we need not fear that our petitions to the throne of God, will either be too high, or too extensive, for he is able to do abundantly better for us than we can ask or think. 'Twere ungrateful, 'twere base to suppress the warmest and boldest desire of our souls when we appear before God:

'twere more ungrateful and baser still to offer them in mockery, with no expectation of their being realized. What, are we actuated by a higher, and purer, and more expansive affection than he whose very nature is LOVE! Would we bear in our arms up to heaven those whom God their Father, will thrust down to an endless hell!! Oh, if poor humanity can in its weakness offer an insult to the Divine Majesty, it is in thus supposing ourselves better than Heaven; in forgetting the humble spirit of Christ, who when addressed as "good master," turned in mild reproof and said, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." While we enjoy this confidence in the goodness of God, we shall feel and manifest a self devotion to his cause and will. Like Jesus, we shall not fear the voice of popular reprobation, nor shall we forget the service of our Maker to yield a senseless acquiescence to the traditions of men. Like him, we shall not listen to the siren of earthly interest or ambition, nor strive to erect a kingdom that is of this world. The exclusive spirit of our religious opponents, will not narrow down our own noble and heavenly views. The frowns of a zealous but misguided priesthood—the finger of scorn—the taunting rebuke—the fanatical exhortation, will all pass us unheeded, faith will triumph over doubt, and hope rejoice even in trials, while the same spirit lives in us that animated and ennobled our divine Master.

The third attribute I mention is COMPASSION. "We have not," says the apostle, "a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" for "as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same." Acquainted with our physical and moral frame, he is qualified to be "a merciful and faithful high priest," for "in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Follow Jesus from Jordan to Calvary, and you will witness one almost uninterrupted manifestation of the spirit of compassion. He sympathized with human suffering in all its thousand forms. He "came not to destroy men's lives but to save them." With woman's he felt for others' woes, and his gift of superior power was employed to minister relief. His was a blessing for all. Who can even read without emotion the simple story of his interview with the weeping and almost disconsolate sisters of Lazarus? His soul was overflowing with compassion and sympathy. Unlike too many of his pretended disciples and ministers, he strove not to drive deeper the barbed shaft in the heart of the mourner, but it was his to soothe, to console, to direct the weeping eye upward where tears are no more. "Thy brother shall live again." And as they went on toward the sepulchre the historian tells us in brief phrase, "Jesus wept." It was not unmanly, nor unbecoming even the Son of God! Although he knew what he would do, he saw the hearts of the sisters broken with grief, and paid "the tribute of his tears" to wounded affection. But the transaction at the gate of Nain surpasses all others in melancholy and delightful interest. "Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother." What a combination of affecting circumstances! He was the only son of a lone widow—her solace—her joy—her hope, whose arm she had fondly trusted would support her feeble steps down the vale of years. His hand she had hoped would smooth her dying pillow,

and at last close her dim eyes in death. He was all she had on earth; and he too was taken away. Oh what moment to display the compassion of a Savior's heart! The son restored to life, was delivered to his mother. But why need I mention instances? The whole ministerial life of Jesus was passed in "doing good," in imparting health and happiness to mankind. And have we the spirit of Christ? Are our souls alive with tenderness and compassion for the poor, and sick and bereaved? Can we as did Jesus weep with them that weep? If not, no matter how long are our prayers—or how frequent our fastings—or how loud our professions, if we have not the spirit of the sympathetic and compassionate Savior, we are none of his.

The fourth characteristic to which I call attention, and which most widely separated Christ from the mass of mankind, was LOVE to ENEMIES. To love our friends is the dictate of our common nature. The "publican and sinner" do this, and its performance bespeaks the exercise of no very high moral principle. On the other hand, to love our enemies requires something of the spirit of heaven. As the Ambassador of God, it was to be expected that Christ would manifest the feelings and affections of the Divine mind. He was Immanuel, God with us, and he who had seen him had seen the Father. We wish that men in forming their conceptions of the Divine character, would more frequently look at Jesus, and learn from his lips and life the Father whom he represented and declared. How different would he appear! How amiable would be the God of heaven and earth, compared with the dark and forbidding object too often presented and by Christians too, for our love and adoration! Malevolence or ill will formed no part of our Savior's character. Always kind, with a heart overflowing with love, he manifested in his conduct the heavenly principle he taught, of forgiving those who injure us, and returning good for evil. His whole soul seemed bound up in the happiness of mankind. Abuse could not change the temper of his mind, persecution could not wean him from the love of his enemies. Even the agonies of the cross were forgotten, while for his cold blooded murderers he prayed, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." I might with pleasure amplify upon this part of our subject; for in loving his enemies, Christ showed himself the Messiah of that God who "is kind to the unthankful and to the evil." I might rise from Christ to a contemplation of God himself, and speak of his undying love to the sinful children of men. I might point out the glaring absurdity of supposing that an unchangeable God should cease to love the objects of his former care and tenderness; and I might hint without exposing myself to the charge of blasphemy, that such a deity as is alas! too frequently described by Christians, is little better than the publican or sinner; for they love those who love them, and what more is he represented as doing? Finally, listen to the words of Jesus, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you: that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Such I regard as the prominent characteristics of our divine Master; humility, devotedness to the will of God and confidence in his goodness, compassion for the afflicted and love to his enemies. And may we contemplate this



character with the admiration it deserves. May we gaze upon it until we feel our hearts warmed and renewed by its influence, and our souls moulded into the same image. May its controlling power be felt in correcting and elevating our affections and forming our lives. We have an example before us for the attainment of whose excellence we are called upon to strive. Professions are nothing. Although we could speak with the tongues of men and of angels, yet without the spirit of Christ we are but sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Our souls must be brought into communion with him, we must feel in a measure as he felt, and live to a degree as he lived to be entitled to his name. What is it that constitutes a real disciple but conformity of thinking and feeling to the Master? And what shall make us *christians* but being like *Christ*?

FROM THE GOSPEL ANCHOR.

### THE CHRISTIAN ARMOR.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." Eph. vi. 13-17.

The apostle in this chapter, recommends to the Ephesians the observance of a variety of duties. He touches upon the relative duties of parents to children and children to parents; of servants to masters and masters to their servants. He then proceeds to mention the difficulties with which they would have to contend, in an age in which all the power and influence of their enemies would be exerted against them. This power and influence were the more to be dreaded from the fact, that they existed in "high places," or in other words, that the civil authorities were opposed to them. To arm them against a combat so unequal, he invests them with the heavenly panoply; he tells them to "put on the whole armor of God."

We shall notice the pieces of this armor separately, and we shall see that it is all of heavenly temper, forged in the furnace of divine love, no single piece being destined for destruction.

The first piece is the girdle of truth—"having your loins girt about with truth." The loins of a man, in scripture language, denote strength. To gird about the loins with truth, therefore, simply means to be strong in the truth. He then, that would wish to overcome the influence of error and the force of prejudice, must have truth on his side. He must further be strong in the truth; always ready, always willing, and always able to give a reason to those who may ask of the hope that is in him.

This piece of armor will assist us in discovering the true from the false soldier. When the christian is ready to support his doctrine fearlessly and boldly, we may give him credit, at all events, for honesty; and believe that he has embraced the truth. When, on the other hand, we see him shun the combat and make some pitiful excuse rather than test the soundness of his principles, we may conclude that he has not the girdle of truth to brace his loins.

Secondly—"The breastplate of righteousness." What is righteousness? Sincerity, honesty, integrity, uprightness. It is of the first importance to the christian soldier, that he be honest, virtuous, and upright. "A conscience void of offence towards God and man," will inspire him with strength and boldness in the hour of combat. Example goes before precept, and he is a poor advocate for the excellency of a doctrine, which exerts no beneficial influence on his own character. We do not assert that a bad man cannot speak the truth, for this would be incor-

rect; the worst men have discoursed well on the beauty of holiness. But he that would be profitable in the service of his Master must unite example with precept.

There is a spurious kind of righteousness in the religious world, against which we should do well to guard. It is a base counterfeit, but it passes for the true "shekel of the sanctuary." It is a shadow, a form of godliness, without the power. The soldier who wears this piece of armor, will make a great show of piety. He will appear before men, very devout, and make great professions. This breastplate was a great favorite with the Pharisees in our Savior's days, and modern Pharisees have imbibed the same taste. It does very well to impose on the credulous, but it is altogether wanting in genuine moral worth.

Thirdly. The christian's sandals—"Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." This piece of armor is peculiarly the christian's. However problematical it may seem, it may be said of the christian, that he wages the war of peace; he destroys his foe by making him his friend; he overcomes evil with good. Wherever he goes, he is the harbinger of peace. This expression is beautifully varied in another portion of scripture. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." Whenever, then, we see the soldier of the cross, we see the herald of peace, a messenger of glad tidings of good things.

The country is overrun with those who call themselves the soldiers of the cross, and we have in this description the means of testing their claims. Are they heralds of mercy and messengers of peace? If "their feet are swift to shed blood;" if their footsteps are marked with suicide, insanity and murder; if they destroy the peace of society, and bring misery into the bosom of families, they are in the service of him who was a murderer and a liar from the beginning. See that ye are not the victims of their wiles.

Fourthly. "The shield of faith." This is indispensable to the christian soldier. He must be confident in the excellency of the cause in which he is engaged. If he is thus armed, all the fiery darts that are hurled against him, (and he will be assailed with the denunciations of hell and damnation,) will fall harmless at his feet. He knows "in whom he has trusted," and not all the calumny, invective, reproach and bitterness of his enemies, will move him from his purposes.

There are many who boast of having the shield of faith, who have no hopes of a conquest. That must be a poor shield. They will pray and labor for the salvation of mankind and the destruction of the devil, and yet they believe that the devil will gain the battle and lead the most of mankind captive. This may account for their want of boldness in the day of battle.

Fifthly. "The helmet of salvation." This is the soldier's crown of rejoicing. His great captain has adorned his brows with the "helmet of salvation." Isaiah, speaking of the Messiah, says—"he put on righteousness for a breastplate, and on his head the helmet of salvation." The foe that lies prostrate beneath the christian warrior, has nothing to fear, for he sees no frown upon his brow, but the "helmet of salvation."

When we see the fanatic dealing out his curses, his brow knit with wrath, his eyes flashing with fire, his voice growling like the distant thunder, we cannot recognize on his head the "helmet of salvation." He must have procured his armor from another furnace than that of "divine love," and his commission from some one else than the captain of salvation.

Sixthly. "The christian's sword." The sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. The soldier of the cross goes to the divine oracles alone to support his views. He combats error

with scripture and not with the devices of man's wisdom. He seeks to gain no proselytes at the expense of principle. The Bible is his creed and to that alone he appeals.

This will distinguish the true from the false soldier. Examine his sword. See that it is of the right metal. If he carries in his hand a creed, a catechism, a confession of faith, he is not a commissioned officer—he is some stragler from the enemies' camp—a deserter—a spy—and you must beware of enlisting under him.

Such is the christian armor designated by the apostle; and while he teaches us what manner of spirit we should be of, it affords us a favorable opportunity of judging of the pretensions of those who call themselves the "Champions of the Cross."

FROM THE TRUMPET.

Fork of Coosa and Tallapoosa,  
Montgom. Co. Ala. Dec. 15, 1831.

REV. AND DEAR SIR—Be not surprized at receiving these few lines from one who is a total stranger, and whose name perhaps has never reached your ears. Should any apology be necessary for my trespassing upon you, I hope it may be found in the subject of my communication, and the very deep interest I feel therein. Should you ask who it is that is speaking to you, I answer, his name you have appended. He was born and raised in Georgia, and from the earliest of his recollection until March, 1830, was a firm believer in an *almighty devil, fallen angels*, and the *eternal* punishment of some of the human race in fire and brimstone, all which I now discard as being the doctrine of men, and not the doctrine of divine revelation. I am now happy in the faith that "God is the Savior of all men especially of those that believe." I became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in September or October, 1822. I was appointed a class leader in said church in the spring of 1825. I continued to exercise the functions of a class leader until the summer of 1830, and without a murmur or complaint. The reading of Winchester's Lectures first began to open the scriptures to my understanding, and I soon became bold in renouncing the doctrine of endless punishment; accordingly I was accused by the preacher in charge, of holding and disseminating a false and dangerous doctrine, and after a kind of mock trial before a committee, I was cast out. I formerly read my Bible with a dread and slavish fear of God. But I now behold a God of love, who also was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

Believing as I do, that God is the Savior of all men, I have been laboring in my feeble way, to teach this glorious truth to others. About eight months since, I commenced laboring in this neighborhood in a public manner. For the last three or four months I have extended my appointments beyond the limits of the neighborhood where I live. Various indeed has been the success that has attended the word—with many, the thought of giving up their Hell and Devil is more terrible than death. Many halt as if to reconsider their ground, while others openly confess the truth. I attended an appointment in Montgomery, the 4th Sabbath in November where we have many respectable friends. They are anxious to build a church, (which they are well able to do,) and employ some regular ministering brother from the north. The friends in this neighborhood are increasing. I have proposed the formation of a Society. Cannot you afford Montgomery Co. Ala. a preacher from the east? Is there not at least one of zeal and talents that would be willing to volunteer in the cause of truth? There is much excitement and I hesitate not to say great good may be done.

Very Respectfully, &c.

WILLIS ATKINS.



## COMMUNICATIONS.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Rev. T. J. Sawyer,  
Dear Sir,

In the 7th number of the Christian Messenger you were so good as to publish a communication of mine, and also in the same number, to accompany it with a very friendly article under the head of "Universal Supplicationist." I am happy to see that though you differ from me in some points, you nevertheless assure me of your friendly regard, and of your prayers for my increase of faith in the final salvation of the world. I have great hope, dear Sir, and I trust no little faith, that God who is rich in mercy will finally destroy sin, and cause all those who have sinned to become virtuous, and consequently happy. But though I *hope* and *pray* for the final salvation of every son and daughter of Adam, yet, as I do not absolutely *know* that all will thus be saved, I do not proclaim it to the world for a certainty. Nevertheless I by no means condemn those who do; but on the contrary, believe they are as good christians, yea, much better, than those who are continually reviling them, and judging them to eternal wretchedness. Perhaps it may be thought by some of your readers, that because I do not inculcate the certainty of the salvation of all men, I cannot with any propriety call myself a Universalist. I care but little about names, but I think the signature I have assumed viz. Universal Supplicationist, as well expresses my system of faith as any I could possibly select for that purpose. I am a Universalist, because I believe our heavenly Father's love to man is universal. I am a Universalist, because I believe his invitation to man (in the words following, "look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth,") is universal. I am a Universalist, because I think it is the duty of every christian to make supplications, prayers, &c. universally for all men. I am a Universalist, because I think the doctrine of endless misery is not found in the Bible, and that those who teach it assume upon themselves too much, and are wise beyond what is written, for it is no where revealed in the Scriptures how long God will punish the sinner. I am a Universalist, because I would in the spirit of meekness "plead the cause of universal benevolence against all opposers," God enabling me so to do. I am a Universalist, also, because I believe it possible and even probable, that God will finally cleanse and save the most rebellious sinner. This I would ever hope for, and pray for "without wrath," and I trust, without "doubting" that it is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior thus to pray.

Here would I pause—without more abundant testimony from the Scriptures, or at least without greater evidence than I possess of the impenitent sinner's destiny, I would never teach as a point of doctrine, the absolute certainty of the salvation of all men, lest I should be wise beyond what is written, for O Lord thy ways are inscrutable and past finding out, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" O then may I not be high minded but fear. Let me "rejoice with trembling." Respecting my own salvation, and the salvation of the world, I would say in the language of the poet,

"Hope humbly then, on trembling pinions soar,  
Wait the great teacher, death, and God adore."

UNIVERSAL SUPPLICATIONIST.

Stamford, Conn.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## WHO ARE UNIVERSALISTS?

Limitarians have said they are "blasphemers, drunkards, men who neither pray in public or private," "promulgators of damnable heresy," &c. &c. Universalists are to be blessed surely,

for this is indeed "all manner of evil," and how "falsely" it may be said, let us examine. A Universalist fully believes in the testimony God has given of himself and the Savior of the world. He believes, "the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our king, the Lord is our Lawgiver, and he will save us." Isa. xxxiii, 22. "Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money," Isa. lii, 3. "The Lord is good, and his tender mercies are over all his works." "He will not contend forever, nor be always wroth." "Christ gave himself a ransom for all men." "All flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord." "Christ is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world," &c. That he is a God who judgeth righteously in the earth, "that though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished." That "He will by no means clear the guilty." Now what is there calculated to make men blasphemers, drunkards, &c. in the belief of the above declarations? Universalists believe that the Creator is such a being as He has declared himself to be; that he regards all men as his children, that his dispensations are intended to promote the happiness of his offspring, that He will in his own time, blot out sin from the Universe, and "God be all in all." Partialists, represent Him as a God of everlasting and inextinguishable wrath—as being far from his creatures, and in favor with none but those who are the subjects of his unconditional election, or those who may have been fortunate enough to appease his anger by their own works. I allow that there may be wicked men who profess themselves Universalists, so there are wicked men who hold to the opposite doctrine, but Universalists, as a body of Christians, are no more disposed to fellowship blasphemers and drunkards, than their Limitarian friends. When we see men openly profane, we may take it for granted that they are not Universalists, for did they sincerely believe that their Heavenly father loved them, that their transgressions were sapping the foundation of all happiness, instead of producing it, they would act differently. We can discover the motives that should lead to the reformation of a froward and profligate son, who has a kind, forbearing, and affectionate father, and the just grounds for censuring his untoward conduct, but an unruly boy who rebels against a father, whose very nature is malignity, deserves but little reprehension, and the more fully he believes his father's ill will towards him, the more rebellious will he be. We beg our opponents to agree with us in one indisputable fact. That there are wicked Calvinists as well as drunken Restorationists, and that they have no more right to affirm that Universalists are "blasphemers" as a body, than Universalists have, to say that Calvinists are all "drunkards." Both are equally absurd, uncharitable, and untrue.

PACIFICUS.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## TENDENCY OF NOVELS.

The ultra religious in our day are vehemently opposed to *Novels*; and attribute to the reading of them, much of the wickedness and consequent suffering which prevails in the civilized world. There is one Novel, or work of fiction, however, which they always exempt from their denunciations. A *Novel*, which, in my opinion, has been more fruitful in mischief, than the most prurient Romance that has ever appeared; and, perhaps, (for it will admit of a question) has done more mischief than all other works of fiction put together.

What *Novel* can this be? Surely it must be the real box of Pandora which has been so long talked about. No, reader, it is no more nor less than "*Milton's Paradise Lost*," a work of fic-

tion, which was first suggested to the mind of the writer by reading Homer; and is far more questionable than Homer's account of the Trojan war; because it contains, in my opinion, greater absurdities. No sensible man, of only ordinary penetration, can read Homer and Milton, and not be convinced of the truth of the above conjecture of the origin of the "*Paradise Lost*." Indeed, such is the strong resemblance in certain parts, that, I am of opinion, it would be a difficult matter to save Milton from all harm, if a charge of plagiarism were to be preferred against him.

Milton may be regarded as the *father* of the orthodox devil. The question of legitimacy I conceive to be beyond dispute settled. He also was the undisputed architect and builder of *hell*; and the inventor of all the regalia of the king of it, his infernal majesty, the great devil of all devils. I will venture to presume, that more than a probability exists, that thousands have been driven to suicide, and fitted for inmates of an insane hospital, in consequence of the abominable errors which have been ushered into the christian church, (as it is called,) since the time of Milton; and clearly referable to the monstrous absurdities contained in his "*Paradise Lost*." As an *extravagant Poem*, it has redounded to the honor of the writer; and proves him to have had a versatile imagination second only to Homer. But it would have been a blessing to the imbecile of both sexes, if Milton had lost his head, when he lost his eyes. H. F.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## DIALOGUE, NO. 2.

P. Well friend U. are you determined to believe that there will be no eternal punishment in the future state for the impenitent?

U. I am daily confirmed in my opinion that "God will have all men to be saved," consequently, I cannot believe in endless misery.

P. We know that God is willing that all should come to Christ and avail themselves of his salvation, and that he "delighteth not in the death of the sinner," but we are not to suppose that he will save any who are unwilling, to comply with the conditions of his salvation which are faith and repentance.

U. Paul says, I believe, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the Gift of God." Well, now, if faith is the gift of God, and if he is willing to save all, will not all, sooner or later, have this faith or boon of salvation? Our salvation cannot depend on God's will and our contingency of becoming willing to seek salvation at the same time.

P. We are left to the freedom of our own wills, death and life are set before us, if we choose to repent and believe, we shall be saved, if not we must be damned.

U. You admit that "God decrees whatsoever comes to pass," now is his will not concerned in his decrees, and can man's unwillingness or power frustrate his will or decrees?—If God wills, or is willing that all men should be saved will it not be contrary to his will if any are not saved?—and does he allow any thing to take place in opposition to his will?

P. If any are not saved, the fault will be their own; the way is provided, and we are invited to accept of salvation.

U. But if any should happen to neglect this acceptance according to your doctrine, they must sink to hell in opposition to God's will, his decrees, and notwithstanding his having provided a Savior. God "decrees whatever comes to pass," "He will do all his pleasure"—has he decreed the endless torment of any, and is it his pleasure to inflict such a punishment?

P. Well if my doctrine fails, yours will secure me, but if mine happens to be right and yours wrong, wo be to you—Good morning.

Q. R.



## CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1832.

## NOTICE.

The Grand-st. Society of Universalists, are requested to meet for the transaction of business at their Church, on Monday evening next, at 7 o'clock. Punctuality is expected, and friends generally are invited to attend.

By order of Trustees.

GEO. DOWNER, Secretary.

February 11, 1832.

## MORALITY OF UNIVERSALISM.

The doctrine of Universal Salvation, is by most professed christians, regarded with an eye of extreme jealousy. They generally acknowledge, it is true, that when looked upon as the final consummation of the great plan of Jehovah, it has something abstractly beautiful and attractive in it, since it presents in so amiable a light, the *benevolence and wisdom* of the God whom they love and adore. Whence then it will be asked, arises this settled and untiring opposition? We answer, (and it is the most charitable view we can take of their conduct,) that it arises from a presentiment, or indistinct fear, perhaps in some a belief, that it leads to immorality, that it gives loose rein to the passions and throws wide open the floodgates of licentiousness. The charge implied in this fear or faith, against the doctrine of Universal grace, would not merit under some circumstances, and should not receive from us, even a passing remark. But we will exercise the charity to believe the great body of our opponents honest and sincere. There are some, the leaders of the people, whom we cannot so readily excuse. It is not for them however, that we write. If we can be the means of correcting errors into which the common people have been led, we shall feel ourselves to have done an acceptable service.

We ask such, then, to hesitate before they denounce as licentious, both us and our doctrine—to examine before they decide, and not condemn us unheard. We do not ask them for any undue charity in the case, but only that we may be judged in common candor. *A tree is known by its fruits.* Let those, then, who know Universalists, not by *hearsay*, not by the *misrepresentations* of ignorant or wicked men, but *personally, familiarly, and extensively* enough to enable them to decide, let those say how far we deserve the shameless abuse that is unsparingly heaped upon us. We pretend to no exemption from the common weakness of our nature. Like other men, we are surrounded by temptations and betrayed to sin. And it would be singular indeed, if some who call themselves Universalists, did not fall into gross vices. But are other sects exempt in this respect? Can we not refer to high misdemeanors, we had almost said in our own city, and of a recent date, even among the functionaries of the sacred desk? But passing this, let our limitarian friend go to the criminal court—let him visit the public prisons—let

him be present at the executions of those who have by our laws forfeited their lives! If Universalists are so licentious, here will be found the conclusive proof. But what is the fact? The very reverse of what he had anticipated! Here are few, we might almost say none, of the *unprincipled and wicked* Universalists, while the prisons are filled, and the gallows is often graced by believers in the *moral and salutary* doctrine of endless misery! And yet with this fact before them, the advocates of endless misery have the hardihood, the unblushing effrontery to declare that Universalism is a licentious doctrine!! If we are asked a reason for the fact above stated, we reply; It is obvious, because those who believe in endless misery, believe it to be for their *neighbors* and not for *themselves*. Besides, although it is a truly awful doom, it is little to be dreaded, since *means* are provided by which the *GUILTY* are easily *cleared*. Again; the limitarian supposes himself (for so he is taught,) to have come into the world deserving, or "liable to, the pains of hell forever;" and the sins of course, which he shall here commit, cannot enhance his guilt or increase his sufferings. Once more; no one will very much fear a *HELL*, however terrible, which by timely repentance, he may so readily escape.

Let us now enquire what it is in the doctrine of Universalism, which is supposed to be so exceedingly licentious. Is it the belief that all men will eventually be made *holy and happy*? First, then, let the reader, for the sake of detecting the ingredient of immorality in this belief, consider himself as a mere spectator, unconcerned in the salvation of the world, who, aside from his sympathies for mankind, had nothing to gain or lose. We ask if the belief that the whole world, himself excepted, was to become *holy and happy* forever, would make him *immoral*? Most certainly not. Why should the fact that others were to be blessed make him wicked? But let us ask the christian, if the belief that his *family* will all be raised to heaven, makes him hate God and serve the devil? Extend the question to his *friends*—his *neighborhood*—the *whole world*, and his answer must be the same. If he has a spark of christian love in his heart, he will only love God the more and serve him the better for the universality of his salvation. There is but one point left then in which the seeds of vice can be concealed. And that is, that we *ourselves* are included in the redemption; and if Universalism makes any man immoral, it is because it teaches him that *he* will eventually become *holy and blessed*. But does not every christian believe this of himself? Then all christians have as great inducements to be *immoral* as Universalists. "Whoso readeth, let him understand." S.

## PROTRACTED MEETINGS.

We took the opportunity of attending some of the services of a four days' meeting lately held in the Bowery Presbyterian Church. We respect any prudent means, adopted in christian sincerity and truth, for the advancement of the gospel and the moral improvement of mankind. But against such measures as are now generally pursued to convert sinners, if what we have seen be a spe-

cimen, we shall speak freely and decidedly. In doing this we believe ourselves doing no more than our duty; for we conceive those measures repugnant to the spirit of the gospel, and detrimental alike to the well-being of community, and the honor and purity of the religion of Jesus. Hell seems to be the theme of revival sermons; it alone affords motives to repentance, and to it we must go for our strongest inducements to love God. The grossest perversions of Scripture, the most extravagant assertions, and the most horrid conceptions of the feverish imagination, seem to be the *play things* of revival preachers, and he is greatest who uses them most. A plain, simple discourse, calculated to enlighten the understanding by illustrating any doctrine of the gospel, or by enforcing it to warm the heart, would be regarded at a 'protracted meeting' as a cold, formal, profitless service. Perhaps we cannot give a better view of what may be expected, and what in some form is actually heard at such meetings, than by presenting a sketch of a sermon to which we listened with unmingled pity on Thursday evening of last week—pity for the people who could be so duped as to sit satisfied with such wretched declamation; and double pity for the clergyman who could so far forget the sanctity of his office as to indulge a paltry ambition to *frighten* his hearers. His text was taken from Luke xvii, 22, "The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it;" the *literal* exposition of which was given as if it had been addressed to the *sinful Jews*, while in fact it was spoken to the *DISCIPLES* themselves—a circumstance which our speaker must have known, but *forgot* to mention. But this was only the beginning. "The days of the Son of man" was interpreted to mean "a season of great and special privileges," the text then *spiritualized*, or as it was said, "appropriately applied," and this season of great and special privileges understood to mean "the *probation state*." Without attempting to prove that "this life" is a *probation state*, the speaker proceeded to show that the very term, probation state, implies that it will end, and fairly convinced us that our stay on earth is short, and will soon be over. Human life and the probation state—the probation state and a season of great and special privileges—a season of great and special privileges, and "the days of the Son of man" were all regarded as terms purely synonymous. The language of the text was then addressed to *sinners*, as an improvement on our Savior, who addressed it to his *disciples*; and the doctrines were drawn from it in the form of "thoughts," which it was said were *plainly taught*. The amount of these thoughts was this: when this life is passed, and *sinners* are in *hell*, they will desire to see one, even one of its days again, but they shall not see it. To prove that our probation closes with this life, "let him that is filthy be filthy still," was quoted. "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever," was used to show the eternity of future misery. In hell, sinners were told they would learn what it was to "lie down in sorrow," and to give something of an idea of this sorrow, a beautiful and



affecting contrast was drawn between a bed of down in this world, and "a bank of living coals in hell." But their doom would be fixed for eternity, and though they prayed to God, and "though they should weep oceans of tears of blood," he would not hear nor pity them. This, it was said, "was not because God would become hard hearted, but because he was just." A line or two of poetry was then quoted, that we cannot repeat, but the sentiment of which was that *MERCY has its limits, beyond which it turns to VENGEANCE*—a sentiment that might do honor to the devil, but would disgrace a man. But enough of this. A professed minister of Christ, who will thus solemnly trifle with the word of God, and the dearest interests and hopes of mankind, and who will thus deliberately disgrace the sacred office, is beneath contempt, and deserves only the unqualified pity of his race. We should observe that the pastor of the Church commended the sermon as a faithful labor, and in his exhortation to sinners, informed them that *there was not a real Christian in that house who would be ONE HOUR in their present situation for TEN THOUSAND WORLDS—no, not ONE MOMENT*. How far gray hairs should exempt him from the charge of blasphemous falsehood, we leave the reader to decide.

It is not necessary to comment on the kind of religion that must be produced by such preaching and exhortation, which set scripture and common sense alike at defiance, and recognize no motive but the fire of an endless hell, either for the love of God or the practice of virtue. S.

#### SCRIPTURE EXPLANATION.

He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Matt. xiii, 37—43.

The above is an explanation of the parable of the wheat and tares, (Matt. xiii, 24—30,) given by our Lord himself to his disciples. It may be thought singular that we should attempt to explain an explanation furnished us on unquestionable authority; but under the influence of the prejudices of education and of errors cherished for ages, we most evidently need an exposition of this as well as any other language of inspiration. Indeed we believe that, at the present day, (though it was far otherwise in the time of our Lord) the explanation is quite as likely to be misunderstood as the parable on which it is given.

Without formally controverting the shocking views, which, to the great injury of the christian cause, ignorant or misguided religionists have persisted in entertaining of this language, we shall, since our limits are somewhat circumscribed, pass directly to the consideration of the subject.

1. We must observe that the parable of which this is an explanation represents "the kingdom of heaven" under the figure of "a man which sowed good seed in his field;" and it may be for the benefit of some of our readers to remark that the synonymous phrases "the kingdom of heaven" and "the kingdom of God," never,\* or seldom mean, as they are generally understood,

\* Perhaps 1 Corinthians xv, 50, may be regarded as a plain exception to this remark. There is however an obvious difference between this and the usual form of expression, inasmuch as in this instance the article is omitted, which generally designates with precision the subject to which it is applied.

a state of immortality and blessedness beyond this life. These expressions are used in strict accordance with the language of the prophet Daniel, who foretold the establishment of a heavenly kingdom in the earth. "And in the days of those kings shall the God of HEAVEN set up a KINGDOM, which shall never be destroyed." Dan. ii, 44. "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a KINGDOM that all PEOPLE, NATIONS, and LANGUAGES should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. vii, 14. Perfectly consistent with these prophecies is the common use of the phrases in question, throughout the New Testament. John Baptist, Christ and his apostles all preached, saying "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The disciples were taught to pray "Thy kingdom come." "The kingdom of heaven" was likened in relation to its commencement, progress and establishment to "a mustard seed," to "leaven," to "a householder," to "a man that went out to sow," to "a net cast into the sea," to "ten virgins," etc. etc. It was represented as coming to us, and hence we are told of those who, like Joseph of Arimathea, "waited for the kingdom of God." All these expressions are wholly inexplicable according to the vulgar notion which removes the kingdom of heaven from this world. If we are asked why it is then called the kingdom of heaven or of God, we reply; because the God of HEAVEN set it up; because it was neither governed by the principles nor warped by the policy of this world; because its spirit, its influence, its end were all heavenly. If these remarks are just, and they will not be called in question we think, by any well informed christian, they will aid us much in understanding our subject. "The children of the kingdom," who were the good seed, and were sown by the Son of man, Jesus Christ, it will be easily seen, were the sincere and persevering disciples and followers of our Lord, or in other words, *genuine christians*. They also were "the righteous," who were "to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." We have before seen what this kingdom is, and that it is set up in this world, "that all people, nations and languages should serve" the Son of man, who is appointed our heavenly king. If this view be correct, "the children of the kingdom," "the righteous" were to shine forth in this world, and not the next; for here is the kingdom of God or the Father. Another circumstance that tends very much to confirm this view, is the fact, that our Savior, in the last verse of the passage under consideration, evidently made allusion to the prophecy of Daniel xii, 3, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." The time and place in which this should be accomplished, is easily discovered. It was, as we are informed in the first verse of that chapter, when there should "be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." By turning to Matt. xxiv, 21, we shall find this language of Daniel quoted by our Lord, and applied to the destruction of Jerusalem; and if Josephus may be relied on it was fulfilled to the letter. Thus far we think we have advanced with caution, and our conclusion is plain. The children of the kingdom were *sincere and persevering christians*, who, after the overthrow of the Jewish religion and power, and when "the kingdom of Christ and God" should be fully established and settled forever, were to shine forth therein in the beauty and excellency, the glory and joy of the heavenly reign, or in other words, the gospel kingdom on earth.

2. Who were the tares? Dr. A. Clarke has shown, and we presume correctly, that the word rendered *tares* is not of Greek, but Chaldean origin, and signifies not *darnel*, as it is more commonly understood, but *bastard* or *degenerate wheat*. This derivation helps the learned Dr. to three expositions of the parable, all of which, we humbly conceive as foreign to the subject as might well be. "Christ seems," he says, "to refer first to the *origin of evil*—God sowed good seed in his field, made man in his own *image and likeness*:—but the enemy, *the devil*, corrupted this good seed, and caused it to degenerate. Secondly, he seems to refer to the state of the Jewish people; God had sowed them at first, wholly a *right seed*, but now they were become utterly *degenerate*, and about to be plucked up and destroyed by the Roman armies, which were the angels or messengers of God's justice, whom he had commissioned to sweep these rebellious people from the face of the land. Thirdly, he seems to refer, also, to the state in which the world shall be found, when he comes to judge it. The righteous and the wicked shall be permitted to grow together, till God comes to make a full and final separation." How many things more, we might imagine that Christ seemed to refer to in a single parable, we shall not stop to inquire, but will just remark, that when a passage is thus applied by an individual to several unconnected subjects, we strongly suspect that he has no distinctive view of it, which satisfies even himself. He must have a singular rage for exposition, who can find three events as distant as the beginning and end of the world, and as unlike as the creation, the overthrow of Jerusalem, and the final judgment of mankind, all referred to in a single passage.

But the *tares* are *bastard* or *degenerate wheat*. May not this circumstance aid us in understanding the parable? Christ explains the tares to be "the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil." In chap. xiii, 47, he commences another parable in which the kingdom of heaven is likened to "a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to the shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Now was not this the fact in regard to the gospel kingdom? and did not Christ teach, as well in this as in the parable we are attempting to explain, that some who should become nominal members of his church, or professedly enter into the incipient kingdom of God, would still prove unfaithful, become *bastard* or *degenerate wheat*, be found "bad" or unworthy, and at last be cut off and destroyed with the mass of the Jewish nation, when that kingdom came with glory and power? That this was a fact, cannot be doubted, nor can it be doubted that our Savior made frequent mention of it during his ministry. His disciples were warned to beware of false prophets, and were assured that not every one that said "Lord, Lord," should enter into his kingdom, (that is, when it should be finally established,) and that even some who had prophesied and cast out devils, and done many wonderful works in his name would be rejected, and that he would profess to them, "I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity." The plain doctrine was, that he who put his hand to the plough and looked back was not fit for the kingdom of God. Hence he who would endeavor to save his life (that is, by denying Christ, or any the like unworthy means,) should lose it. The same doctrine is taught, Matt. xxiv, 43, and so to the end of the chapter, and illustrated by the parables of the "ten virgins," and the "man travelling into a far country." It is clearly implied in all these passages, that some *christians*, and even some *teachers*, would, at the coming of Christ, be found unfaithful. They were to be "cut asunder, and their portion appointed with the hypocrites."



They were to find the door of the gospel kingdom shut against them, and were to be cast into outer darkness. The apostle informs 1 Tim. iv, 1, that "in the latter times" [towards the close of the Jewish dispensation] some should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. Were not they the *tares*, the *degenerate wheat*, the children of the devil, spoken of in our text? And were not they those to whom the apostle alluded, 2 Thess. ii, 3, when he declared that the day of Christ should not come unless there first came a *falling away*? From all these considerations, must we not conclude that our Lord here spoke of some who had once been *christians*, and had, from some cause or other, turned away from the faith? Were it not so, we cannot conceive how those who had never been in the kingdom, could be "gathered out," as our text affirms, and as is also plainly asserted in the parable of the *net*.

3. But it will be said, this must have all taken place in the age of the apostles, and our text says, "the harvest is the end of the world." We may remark that the expression, *the end of the world*, here used, is found six times in the New Testament, in the following places: Matt. xiii, 39, 40, 49; xxiv, 3; xxviii, 20, and Heb. ix, 26, to which we refer our reader. In Hebrews, it cannot mean any thing else than the *end of that age or dispensation*. The same may be said of Matt. xxiv, 3, for our Savior himself limits it to that *generation*. We hazard nothing in asserting that this is always the meaning of the phrase, so that instead of forming a ground of objection to our views, it tends very much to confirm them. Indeed, it furnishes an argument in their favor, which cannot be resisted.

4. The *tares* were to be cast into a *furnace of fire*. In Malachi iv, 1, it is said, "Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven [or furnace] and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up." In the 5th verse we read, "Behold, I will send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." John Baptist was "Elijah the prophet," and "the great and dreadful day of the Lord" was the time of the coming of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem. This we think is beyond dispute. Isaiah xxxi, 9, speaks in the name of the "Lord whose fire is in Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem;" which we suppose may designate the locality of the *furnace of fire*, spoken of in our text. We might enlarge upon the two last heads, but we have neither time nor room.

If our views are correct, and we will be grateful to any man who will point out our error, "the children of the kingdom" were *true and faithful christians*—"the *tares*" were *false and evil professors*, who had fallen away from the faith—"the end of the world" was the *end of the Jewish dispensation*—"the furnace of fire" was *Jerusalem itself surrounded by the victorious Romans*, or it prefigured the awful destruction that awaited the Jewish nation and in which false christians would share. S.

FROM BADGER'S WEEKLY MESSENGER.

### EXEGETICAL MEANING OF THE WORD "GENERATION."

"Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." Luke xxi, 32.

This text has often been the occasion of perplexity. The prediction of the coming of the Son of man "in the cloud, with power and great glory," and the assertion that this generation should not pass away till "all be fulfilled," have appeared to many to locate the judgment day within the limits of the same generation that witnessed the crucifixion. But by reference to 1st Peter ii, 9, we find that saints in general are called "a generation," a chosen generation; that is, they are a distinct class inher-

iting the same peculiarities in one age as another. We also find it thus noted in the Scriptures of truth, "They shall be counted to the Lord for a generation;" now, besides those who are thus counted to the Lord, there are others who are in like manner as *generations*, thus identifying particular bodies or descriptions of men; not as to their existence at a particular point of time, or during the individual life of man; but as they should exist from age to age. Thus the Scribes and Pharisees are "counted for a generation." The wise man in the Proverbs makes mention of four distinct generations, which at one and the same period seem to have existed in the world, and to have continued to exist long after the termination of his natural life; nor have we reason to infer that they do not exist now.

### REMARKS.

It is unnecessary to inquire into the motives which influenced the writer of the above. If his "exegetical meaning" be *false*, it matters nothing to us whether it originated in *ignorance* or was dictated by *fraud*. His object is plain. It was to show that the word "generation" found in his text, and also in Matt. xxiv, 34, does not mean an *age*, but a *race*, a *stock*. The difficulty which he attempts to obviate is indeed a serious one. If "this generation" does *exegetically* mean *this age*, or rather the *people* of this age, it is clear that "the prediction of the coming of the Son of man, in a cloud with power and great glory," and the "judgment day," have already passed; and consequently much of the proof usually adduced in support of the glorious and blessed doctrine of endless misery, is lost forever. We commend our writer's ingenuity which has discovered that "generation" used in Luke xxi, 32, and "generation" found in 1st Peter, ii, 9, exegetically mean the same thing, and explain each other. Had he troubled himself to look into his Greek Testament he might have seen, however, that Peter employs a word to signify *generation*, quite different from that found in Luke, and that the two are never regarded by the New Testament writers as synonymous. For instance *genes* used by Luke signifies, perhaps without a single exception, a *generation*, i. e. the *time* or *people* of an *age*—*genos* used by Peter, means a *race*, *stock*, *kind*, and is not, except in this one passage, we believe, translated *generation*.

That Christ came in his glory, and that he sat in judgment "within the limits of the same generation that witnessed his crucifixion," is, unless our writer's exegetical method of discovering the meaning of Scripture shall be adopted, clearly proved by the following, together with many other passages, viz. Matt. xvi, 27, 28. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, *there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom*." S.

### REV. WILLIS ATKINS.

We give in another part of our paper extracts of a letter from Br. Atkins, addressed to Br. H. Ballou, of Boston. We owe an apology for not noticing it sooner, but from one cause and another it has been crowded by for a week or two. The first intimation that we had of such a person was the receipt of his name among a list of subscribers in Montgomery, without knowing, certainly, whether he was a Universalist, or only a liberal opposer. His letter, however, fully explains, and as information from that quarter may be gratifying to our readers generally, we give it in part, not having room for the whole. We wish him every gratification that his present glorious sentiments are calculated to afford, and trust he will be eminently useful to our cause in that section. P.

### NEW SOCIETY.

A new Universalist Society has recently been formed in Wommelsdorf, Pa. consisting of several of the most respectable inhabitants in that part of the country. Last May the doctrine was preached in that place for the first time—now we have a Society formed, and a place for public worship. They have engaged Br. Myers to labor with them a portion of his time.

### ANOTHER GERMAN LABORER.

We are informed from Reading, Pa. that a letter has just been received by Gen. Keim of that place, giving the pleasing intelligence that a Mr. EINDEMAN, of Mansfield, O. of the German Reformed Church, has renounced the cruel doctrine of endless wo, and embraced that of the final holiness and happiness of all the intelligent creation. His letter is said to be a fair specimen of German Literature, and he will doubtless be a valuable acquisition to our cause in that section.

### ANOTHER CONVERSION IN THE MINISTRY.

The last Sentinel and Star states that a young man by the name of ASHER A. MARTIN, who has for about three years been preaching among the Christians, or New Light Brethren, has lately renounced the doctrine of a partial salvation, and embrace that of the final holiness and happiness of all. He sustains an unspotted character, and promises to be highly useful in our cause.

### MODERN REVIVALS.

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

The last Christian Intelligencer states, that in a small town in Somerset Co. Me. where there has been a revival, there are now four persons, (2 males and 2 females) who are laboring under mental derangement from these "protracted" operations.

### DEDICATION.

On Sunday, Jan. 8, the building lately fitted up by the Universalists in the borough of Wommelsdorf, Pa. was dedicated to the worship of God, "who is the Savior of all men." First Sermon (German) by Br. J. Myers, of Petersburg; second Sermon, by Br. T. Fisk, of New-York; Prayer by Br. Fisk. Seven Sermons were preached on Saturday and Sunday to large and attentive audiences—four in English, and three in German.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

An excellent Sermon by Br. W. S. Balch will appear next week. An able article from Br. W. Balfour is gratefully received, and will appear soon. Two articles from our well known and respected correspondent, H. F., are on hand, and shall receive attention in two or three weeks.

*Erratum.* On 1st page, 1st column, 8th line from bottom, read *Valhalla*, instead of *Valahall*.

### LETTERS AND REMITTANCES.

Received at this office, ending February 8th.

E. E. G. Walton, N. Y. \$1; P. Master, Hamtranc, Mich. Ter.; D. O. W. Bridgeport, Ct. \$1; P. Master, Reading, Pa. \$10.

### GRAND STREET CHURCH.

Br. ROBERT SMITH will supply the desk in Grand-Street church, Sunday (to-morrow) the 12th inst.

### BROOKLYN.

The Senior Editor of this Paper, will preach at the District School Room, Concord-st. Brooklyn, Sunday, (to-morrow) the 12th inst. afternoon and evening.

### NOTICE.

"The Ladies' Dorcas Society" will meet at Mrs. Hallsted's, 65 Montgomery-st. on Wednesday next at 2 o'clock, P. M.



FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## LINES,

Addressed to Mrs. L. of Southold, L. I. on the death of her infant.

And thus it is the beautiful so soon must pass away,  
The brightest flowers and loveliest, but blossom for a day,  
The aged oak with fibres strong, stands firm amidst the blast  
Whose desolating breath has seared the ivy round it clasp.

Why was it that the one so loved, so cherished and so dear,  
Thus soon should leave its cradled bed to deck the sable bier;  
Oh, who can gaze on such an one so beautiful in death,  
And weep not at the cruel call, which claimed its infant breath!

How little deemed I when I saw thy infant in its bloom,  
And wish'd it long, long years of health, 'twas ripening for the tomb;  
And when I saw thy brightened eye, and read the mother there,  
I prayed thy lovely babe might live, to bless thee for thy care.

Who can describe a mother's love—her fond and anxious fears?  
" 'Tis born of woe and sanctified by suffering" and by tears;  
And neither time nor change can move the mother to forget,  
The beings with such fervor lov'd, e'en though their sun be set.

Though lost to us the beautiful! endeared by many ties,  
It has fled from this cold earth of ours, unto its native skies:  
And there thou'lt meet thy lovely one, removed from sigh or groan  
Where the knell of love no more is heard, and parting is unknown. S. A. M.

## THE VOICE OF WINTER.

I come—my breath is on the blast!  
A wreath of clouds is o'er me;  
And the loveliest flowers of earth, as I pass,  
Have withered and shrunk before me,  
I have found the earth in its richest bloom,  
I come to gather its pride to the tomb;  
I have found it all with joy elate,  
I come to make it desolate.

The leaves of the trees are rustling and gay,  
The sheen of the river is bright as the spring;  
I will blow those rustling leaves away,  
I will stop the streamlet's murmuring:  
I will strip of its robe the towering oak,  
Its root shall be torn, and its limbs be broke;  
I will howl through the waste, and the wild beasts there  
At the sound of my voice shall shrink to their lair.

The eagle shall close her soaring wing,  
And seek her nest on the eyrie high;  
And every songster cease to sing,  
At the sound of my ominous rushing by?  
I will blow to the dust the gayest flowers,  
And strip of their pride the fairest bowers;  
I will clothe the earth in white as I come—  
The winding sheet of her wintry tomb!

## ON THE CHOICE OF A WIFE.

Go, my son, said the eastern sage to Talmore,  
Go forth to the world; be wise in pursuit of knowledge—be wise in the accumulation of riches—be wise in the choice of friends; yet little will this avail thee, if thou choosest not wisely the wife of thy bosom.

When the rulers of thy people echo thy sayings, and the trumpet of fame sounds thy name abroad among the nations, more beautiful will the sun of thy glory set, if one bright cloud reflects its brightness, and sullied for ever will be the splendor of the rays, if like a dark spot she crosses its surface.

Consider this, then, my son, and look well to her ways, whom thou wouldst love; for little

will all else avail thee if thou choosest not wisely the companion of thy bosom. See yonder, the maidens of Tinge. They deck themselves with the gems of Golconda and the rose of Kashmir—they themselves more brilliant and beautiful; but ha! take not them to thy bosom; for the gem will grow dim, and the rose wither and naught remain to thee of all thou didst woo and win.

Neither turn thyself to the proud one who vaunts herself on having scanned the pages of Vedas, and fathomed the mysteries of the holy temple. Woman was not born to wield the sceptre, or direct the counsel; to reveal the mandates of Brama, or expound the sacred verses of Menu. Rather be it hers to support thee in grief and soothe thee in sickness; to rejoice in thy prosperity and cling to thee in adversity. Reflect, then, my son ere thou choosest, and look to her ways whom thou wouldst make the wife of thy bosom.

A wife! What a sacred name, what a responsible office! She must be the unspotted sanctuary to which wearied man may flee from the crimes of the world, and feel that no sin dare enter there. A wife! She must be as pure as spirits around the Everlasting Throne, that man may kneel to her, even in adoration, and feel no abasement. A wife! She must be the guardian angel of his footsteps on earth, and guide them to heaven; so firm in virtue that should he for a moment waver, she can yield him support, and replace him upon its firm foundation; so happy in conscious innocence, that when from the perplexities of the world he turns to his home, he may never find a frown where he sought a smile. Such, my son thou seekest in a wife; and reflect well ere thou choosest.

Open not thy bosom to the trifler; repose not thy head on the breast which nurseth envy and folly, and vanity. Hope not for obedience where the passions are untamed; and expect not honor from her who honoreth not the God who made her.

Though thy place be next to the throne of princes and the countenance of royalty beam upon thee—though thy riches be as the pearls of Omar, and thy name be honored from the east to the west—little will it avail thee, if darkness and disappointment, and strife be in thine own habitation. There must be passed thine hours in solitude and sickness—and there must thou die. Reflect, then, my son ere thou choosest and look well to her ways whom thou wouldst love; for though thou be wise in other things—little will it avail thee, if thou choosest not wisely the wife of thy bosom.

FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.  
UTILITY.

With us, the spirit of the age is clamorous for utility—for visible, tangible utility—for bare, brawny, muscular utility. We would be roused to action by the voice of the populace, and the sounds of the crowded mart, and not "lulled asleep in shady idleness with poets' pastimes." We are swallowed up in schemes for gain, and engrossed with contrivances for bodily enjoyments, as if the soul needed no aliment, and the mind no raiment. We glory in the extent of our territory, in our agricultural privileges, and our commercial advantages. We boast of the magnificence and beauty of our natural scenery—of the various climates of our sky—the summers of our Northern regions—the salubrious winters of the South, and the various products of our soil, from the pines of our Northern highlands to the palm tree and aloes of our Southern frontier. We boast of the increase and extent of our physical strength, the sound of populous cities, breaking the silence and solitude of our western territories—plantations conquered from the forest, and gardens

springing up in the wilderness.—Yet the true glory of a nation consists not in the extent of its territory, the pomp of its forests, the majesty of its rivers, the height of its mountains, and the beauty of its sky; but in the extent of its mental power—the majesty of its intellect—the height and depth and purity of its moral nature. It consists not in what nature has given to the body, but in what nature and education have given to the mind:—not in the world around us, but the world within us; not in the circumstances of fortune, but in the attributes of the soul: not in the corruptible, transitory, and perishable forms of matter, but in the incorruptible the permanent, the imperishable mind.—True greatness is the greatness of the mind—the true glory of a nation is moral and intellectual pre-eminence.

## FLATTERERS.

Among the herd of trifling characters that infest society, none are more despicable and insignificant than flatterers. Instead of acting the part of faithful monitors, by exposing the follies of mankind, they conceal their faults and soften their vices. They are ever striving to ingratiate themselves into the good opinion of those with whom they converse, by the most shameful falsehoods, and scruple not to sacrifice their honor and probity, to gain the esteem of their superiors.

That praise or commendation is pleasing to the mind of man, is a truth that cannot be denied; but when improperly administered, or taken in large draughts, it intoxicates and unfits the person for impartial judgment; but due praises, bestowed by a skillful hand, may stimulate the virtuous to the performance of greater actions.

Generally speaking, flattery awakens our self-love, stirs up our vanity, renders us proud, haughty and conceited; in short it directly opposes the celebrated precept, "Know thyself," as well as those principles of humanity and brotherly love enjoined in the gospel. If we take an extensive view of its mischievous effects, I am convinced that every friend of truth and sincerity, will look upon the man who accustoms himself to utter false praises, as a contemptible being, only worthy to associate with those who like himself pay no respect to veracity. Indeed the more I reflect on the vice, the stronger is my belief that it is pregnant with evil, from the polite compliment which is not due, to the fulsome adulation offered by the meanest of the human species.

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